

CHEAPER GAS, NOT YET

Consumers Begin to Doubt Rumor of Voluntary Cut.

COMPANY HAS GIVEN NO SIGN

May Offer to Reduce Price to 90 Cents, or Even 80 Cents, Rather Than Permit a Thorough Overhauling of Its Transactions by Congressional Investigating Committee.

If the Washington Gaslight Company intends voluntarily to reduce the price of gas to consumers, following the plan of the Georgetown Gaslight Company, it is not yet ready to make the announcement. Many people are of the opinion that it does not intend to make such a reduction. This opinion is growing. The president of the company yesterday declined to discuss the subject. A mere mention of gas seemed to disturb him. He would not say a word about it.

The suggestion is made, though not from any authoritative quarter, that rather than permit a thorough overhauling of its affairs and the staying bare of transactions which might prompt Congress to annul its charter, the company may finally offer to furnish gas at 90 cents per thousand feet, or even at 80 cents, if the worst should come.

Another suggestion heard yesterday, also unauthorized, was that Chairman Babcock, of the House District Committee, having brought about a 25 per cent reduction at Georgetown, would insist upon a corresponding cut immediately in Washington, and, failing to secure it, he would be found earnestly championing the Madden bill when Congress reconvenes. If he intends to take this course, however, he is keeping it to himself.

President Deebie Gives Offense. A member of the gas-house lobby yesterday afternoon displayed a very bitter feeling against W. Riley Deebie, president of the Georgetown Gaslight Company, because that gentleman, in his statement regarding the reduction his company voluntarily made, had happened to mention the increased cost of the manufacture and distribution of gas at Georgetown as compared with Washington. Of course, Mr. Deebie simply reiterated what has been said time and again to Congress, in explanation of the higher rate heretofore charged the people of Georgetown, but any reference to this now is regarded at the gas house as most untimely.

The fact that Mr. Deebie had so deeply resented would really seem to indicate that the Washington Gaslight Company, after all, has no thought of following the example of the Georgetown Gaslight Company, and that public expectation on this point is wholly unwarranted.

Gas Goes Up Despite Reductions. The commonest remark among people who discuss the gas question nowadays is that, notwithstanding the reduction a few years ago, gas bills have remained just as high, and many consumers insist that they are now higher than they ever were, for precisely the same amount of service.

One gentleman, a Senator, stated that his bills had not only been higher than they were, since the reduction, but a bill had been presented to him for a period of four months when his house was closed and his family were at their summer home. He said that after closing his house he had paid the bill for the current month and when he returned he found another bill. No one had occupied the empty house at any time, but the bill for the regular amount consumed in the winter months was presented to him. He refused to pay it, and told the collector to take the money, but the collector refused to do so. Nothing more has been heard of the matter.

Manipulation of Figures. Mr. W. J. Morris, of 1214 L street northwest, is one of the citizens of the District of Columbia who believes that we should have had 75-cent gas a long time ago. He says: "I am afraid that there is little utility in going to the records and getting the figures as to the cost of manufacturing gas and then arguing that cheaper gas on that basis. The figures are confusing. They are made by experts and they require experts to interpret them; to the average layman they mean nothing. If there is any chance that figures show adverse results, or results that the corporate interests deem best to keep from the public, why then books containing them may be shipped away and burned."

"As a matter of fact, every citizen of the District of Columbia knows that gas is cheap."

WEATHER CONDITIONS.

U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Weather Bureau, Washington, Saturday, Dec. 29, 1906.—8 p. m. The disturbance central this morning in extreme northern Texas has advanced to Eastern Kansas. It has caused rain in the Mississippi Valley south of Iowa, and snow in Western Nebraska and in portions of South Dakota.

Temperatures are still considerably above the seasonal average east of the Mississippi and in the Northwest. The Kansas depression will move slowly eastward in the next twenty-four hours and cause general rain in the Mississippi Valley, the Ohio Valley, the East Gulf and South Atlantic States, and snow in the Upper Lake region and the Lower Missouri Valley. The weather on Monday promises to be rainy in the Atlantic Coast States, with snow in the Lower Lake region and the Ohio Valley. Tuesday will be mostly clear in all districts east of the Mississippi, except that rain is possible along the Lower Lakes and in New England.

It will be somewhat colder Sunday west of the Mississippi, and colder Monday in the Ohio Valley and the East Gulf States. The winds along the New England and Middle Atlantic coasts will be fresh northeast to east; on the South Atlantic coast fresh variable, becoming southeasterly, and on the Gulf coast from southerly.

Local Temperatures. Midnight, 40; 2 a. m., 39; 4 a. m., 39; 6 a. m., 39; 8 a. m., 38; 10 a. m., 42; 12 noon, 47; 2 p. m., 50; 4 p. m., 51; 6 p. m., 47; 8 p. m., 44; 10 p. m., 41. Maximum, 51; minimum, 38. Relative humidity—8 a. m., 52; 2 p. m., 47; 8 p. m., 38. Rainfall, 0.

Temperature same date last year—Maximum, 57; minimum, 43.

Temperatures in Other Cities. Temperatures in other cities together with the amount of rainfall for the twelve hours ended at 8 p. m. yesterday, are as follows:

	Max.	Min.	8 p. m.	Rain-
Asheville, N. C.	58	40	50	T.
Atlanta, Ga.	60	32	56	T.
Baltimore, Md.	58	38	50	T.
Birmingham, Ala.	58	38	50	T.
Boston, Mass.	46	30	40	T.
Buffalo, N. Y.	26	24	36	T.
Chicago, Ill.	38	20	34	T.
Cincinnati, Ohio	41	28	42	T.
Cleveland, Ohio	41	28	42	T.
Dayton, Ohio	41	28	42	T.
Denver, Colo.	42	22	40	T.
Des Moines, Iowa	41	20	32	0.6
Indianapolis, Ind.	40	24	30	0.6
Keokuk, Iowa	40	24	30	0.6
Kansas City, Mo.	48	24	48	0.24
Little Rock, Ark.	52	48	52	0.28
Louisville, Ky.	40	20	36	T.
Memphis, Tenn.	48	28	38	T.
New Orleans, La.	70	60	64	0.02
New York, N. Y.	46	34	44	T.
North Platte, Neb.	28	24	30	T.
Omaha, Neb.	38	28	38	0.90
Pittsburgh, Pa.	44	36	42	T.
Salt Lake City, Utah	40	31	35	T.
St. Louis, Mo.	49	39	41	0.02
St. Paul, Minn.	41	24	38	T.
Springfield, Ill.	48	28	38	T.
St. Vincent, Miss.	58	44	52	0.20

can be furnished in Washington for 75 cents. That is a positive and certain thing, and it makes no difference what the figures of the Washington Gas Company show. It has not been so long ago since a committee of reputable citizens, headed by Mr. Anthony Pollock, who was since lost, when the Adriatic sunk with all on board, offered to furnish gas to the people of Washington for 75 cents, and they were prepared to give a cash guarantee of \$200,000, to be forfeited if they failed to do as they promised. Now, no one is going to say that these hard-headed men of business were visionaries. They knew what they were doing when they made that offer, and knew, too, that they were not offering philanthropy to Washington. It was a plain business proposition, and had it been accepted they would have made money and the people of Washington would have had a cheaper service.

The Rate in Cincinnati.

"It is all folly to talk about 'confession' and 'justice' in reducing the price of gas. Why, in Cincinnati, the home city of John McLean, president of the Washington Gaslight Company, gas is furnished for 50 cents for fuel purposes and 75 cents for illumination. It had been a good deal higher than that, \$1 or \$1.25, I think, but the franchise was about to expire and the company agreed to the reduction to 50 and 75 cents in consideration for a twenty-five-year extension of the franchise."

"If they can do this in Cincinnati they can do it here, and they should be made to. If not, why it would not take twenty-four hours to organize a company that would take over the present gas plant at a fair valuation and agree to furnish gas for 75 cents."

"I believe the bill that has been introduced by Mr. Madden will pass, but I want to say that there should be incorporated the very strictest provisions as to volume and quality of gas, because there are many ways of getting the best of the consumer. We want gas at 75 cents a thousand, but we want good, not poisonous, gas, and gas with good illuminating power."

"It seems to me to be strange that a stranger to the District should have to introduce a bill for our relief. It is a wonder that the Commissioners of the District should not have recognized the need."

SILENCE AT THE GAS HOUSE.

Forbidding Hand Balks Any Discussion of Madden Bill.

From the Washington Times. If the Washington Gaslight Company intends to answer the Madden bill for cheaper gas by voluntarily reducing the price of its commodity, it is strongly reticent on the subject. If it intends to fight the bill in Congress, it does not want the fact advertised.

John R. McLean, president of the company, would not say a word about it—except the words necessary to inform a Times reporter that he would not say a word.

The reporter went into the waiting room outside President McLean's office and sent in his card. In a moment the president entered the ante-room. Apparently he did not wish the reporter to have a chance to linger in the office.

"Well, sir," asked President McLean, keeping close to the door leading into his private office.

"We would like to have your views on the gas situation," he was informed.

The president's right hand went to a level with his forehead, the palm toward the reporter. It was a forbidding gesture, a movement indicative of caution and silence.

Mr. McLean prepared to go back into his office.

He shook his head, behind the forbidding palm.

"Glad to see you as man," he said, the hand still upraised.

And in the twinkling of an eye, in the passing of a second, with the hand palm outward, still on a level with his forehead, the president of the company has turned into his private office, closing the door upon the reporter and killing at least one opportunity for the public to know what the gas company will do.

FOND MEMORIES AWAKENED.

Little Child Brings Tears to Hardened Old Man's Eyes.

The sight of a little child often appeals to the heart of the most hardened man of the world.

An old man with several days' growth of beard on his face and a flushed complexion, sat on the wall surrounding the Hancock statue at Seventh street and Pennsylvania avenue yesterday afternoon and watched the crowds pass by. A woman, accompanied by her grown daughter and a little child, appeared. The baby appealed to the man at once. With some hesitancy he approached the little one and took the hand that had been extended toward him. Tenderly he took the baby in his arms and kissed its rosy cheeks.

"I once had several little ones," he said, as tears came to his eyes. "They are mine yet," continued the man, "but they don't know where am. It's my own fault, though. If only I hadn't—"

The man finished speaking abruptly, turned and walked down the avenue in the direction of a saloon.

HARRIMAN TO AID CHINA.

Will Transport Red Cross Supplies Free to Famine Sufferers.

The State Department has received a message from E. H. Harriman offering to transport free of charge on his ships any supplies which the National Red Cross desires to send to the famine sufferers in China. The text of Mr. Harriman's telegram, which was directed to the president, follows: "Referring to your appeal for help on behalf of the famine-stricken Chinese, we are ready to take free from San Francisco to Woon Sung, which is the anchorage for Shanghai and Hongkong, by our San Francisco lines and to Hongkong by our Portland lines, any supplies you want to forward, and thereby perhaps save delay of having to wait for government transportation."

The Red Cross will probably avail itself of the offer made by Mr. Harriman. The president, however, has declined to accept the post of manager of the Calumet Engineering Works, in Chicago. Mr. Dugan has been in the employ of the Southern for five years, most of which time he has been in this city.

The officials of the road express great regret at losing a man of such caliber. He is a young man, being only thirty-five years old, and his progress with the railway company was considered remarkable. The new position affords him ample opportunity for a display of his ability in the engineering line. He is a native of Missouri.

Roller Skating Rink.

The game of roller polo has received a decided boost in the past few weeks through the efforts of the Capital City roller rink. It is interesting as well as exciting, and affords an excellent indoor recreation. The management has interested itself to such an extent that a team has been organized among the employees of the rink, and games have been played with local teams as added attractions.

LIGHT, HEAT, POWER

Government Buildings to Be Supplied in Groups.

BIG MODERN POWER PLANTS

Congress Has Appropriated Over a Million Dollars for One Plant—The Other Surveyed and Planned Out by Experts—No Gas in the Capitol, The Downtown Group.

"In only a few years on this neutral and ideal ten miles square," said an old government official, the other day, "and you will see the finest system of lighting, heating, and furnishing power that can be found anywhere on the face of the earth."

The introduction of electricity within the past twenty years in every branch of city life has been one of the marvels of the age. Men can be found almost anywhere who can remember when, as college boys, they asked the professor of physics why it was not possible to use electricity as a motive force, they were invariably told that the difficulty of securing the mechanical device that would convert the current into a rotary motion in wheels would forever, no doubt, make it impossible to use electricity in the place of steam.

There are scores of prominent scientists now in high places throughout the country who talked in this way thirty years ago. To-day they tread streets and parks lighted by the mysterious "liquid," they ride upstairs in elevators moved by electricity, they ride downtown in cars propelled by it and kept warm by it, and over the telephone, by means of it, they conquer all space.

Few know that already the government is well on the way to lighting and heating the various department buildings with electricity. As a mere matter of saving in the labor of handling coal and keeping the buildings clean the innovation became practically a necessity. From the standpoint of the disburser, the change was long ago most earnestly to be desired.

An Economical Plant.

"We have found our plant here in the Interior Department," said Chief Clerk Dawson of that department, "a success in every way. We make over in the old Post-office Department building now occupied by the Patent Office and the Indian Bureau, all the light and heat we require for these two buildings, and we also light the Pension Building. We are rid of the noise and dirt of the boilers we used to have here and the results are fine in every way."

"We keep the buildings up to an even and healthful temperature. The problems of ventilation are more easily handled and the danger from fire is probably reduced very considerably. We do not heat the Pension Building mainly because our plant has its limitation, but I do not see why groups of public buildings like this may not be connected up to one central plant and thus supplied with light, heat, and power."

"Of one thing let me tell you, we are certainly well satisfied. That is that the cost of this plant is giving us a big saving over steam and gas and I may also say over the service rendered the general public of Washington. Our electricity for these three buildings for light and heat cost us two of them for heat and power costs us not to exceed 3 cents per kilowatt hour. The outside price, I believe, is 10 or 12 cents to the consumer. As a result of competition some years ago there are contracts that show that light and power can be furnished somewhere near our figures. The Geological Survey is getting light at 1 cent per kilowatt hour. I believe the Treasury Department has a contract for a portion of its service at 4 cents. I am not sure our figure is the lowest. With a larger plant the cost would be lower, but what we have found it to be here."

No Gas in the Capitol.

"You could not find an ounce of gas in the Capitol," said Col. Dan Ramsdell, Sergeant-at-Arms of the Senate, when the matter was brought to his attention. "No, sir, we don't want any gas here. We have electric lights in every conceivable place where we need them, and our light is fine always. We have our own dynamo and a large and up-to-date plant. We don't know what a gas bill is up here, and we don't want to, either. The building is fully wired, and if at any time we want to shift to any other plant we will be perfectly easy of accomplishment. We heat our end of the building still with steam, but electric heating is bound to come when the new light, heat, and power plant is completed. It will relieve us of a great deal of dirt, noise, and labor, and will be quite welcome."

"Since that gas explosion some years ago over at the Supreme Court," said Col. Henry Casson, Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Representatives, "we have been opposed to the use of gas in the Capitol."

Several boxes of choice fruit were received at the White House yesterday for President Roosevelt. The sender is Richard H. Black, of Twentieth and Elm streets, Spokane, Wash.

While the packages were en route to their distinguished destination some joker got busy with a lead pencil. Written in different places on one of the boxes is the name "Bryan." In a large, bold hand is the sentence, "Hello, Teddy, how are you?" Directly under the greeting appears the name "W. J. Bryan," evidently written by the same person.

The fruit from Washington State to Washington City, by an admiring citizen to the President, stood in the waiting room of the executive offices yesterday and attracted much attention. It will be held for Mr. Roosevelt and his family until their return from "Pine Knot" on Monday.

Trics to Sell Watch and Is Arrested. Charles Bryan, aged forty-nine, of 18 F street northwest, was arrested by Detectives Hartigan and Baur yesterday afternoon on the charge of obtaining money under false pretenses. Bryan, who has for many years been a conspicuous character among the peddlers of cheap jewelry and novelties in this city, was attempting to sell a cheap watch under the pretense that it had a solid gold case and was of the finest make. At the time of the arrest he was in the neighborhood of the Pennsylvania station, and was attempting to make a bargain with some of the market people. He was taken to the First precinct station, where he gave collateral for his appearance in court Monday.

Will Hold Farewell Service. There will be a celebration of Holy Communion at the Ninth Street Christian Church this morning by the Rev. B. E. Utz, who will leave the city next week on his way to Palestine. The new individual service will be used for the first time.

CLOSED ALL DAY NEW YEAR'S. FOR NEW YEAR'S RECEPTIONS AND FAMILY FEASTS.

Particular attention is called to our Ampelos Ranch, 65c. qt., \$2.50 gallon; Harvest Punch, 50c. qt., \$2.00 gallon; Arrak Punch, \$1. qt.

Christian Xander's 909 7th St. Phone M-275

CATHOLICS TO MEET

Will Protest Against French Policy To-night.

NOTEL SPEAKERS TAKE PART

Dr. Stafford, Rabbi Simon, Edgar Gans, and Others Will Discuss Church Policy at Columbia Theater—Large Delegation from Baltimore Is Expected to Attend.

The mass meeting to be held to-night at the Columbia Theater to protest against the action of the government of France in the confiscation of the property of the Catholic church will be called to order at 8:15 o'clock by Thomas J. Donovan, who will introduce P. J. Halligan, the presiding officer. The doors of the theater will be opened at 7:30 and the public has been invited.

A final meeting of the committee on arrangements was held last night, and every detail of the programme was gone over so that no mistake can mar the success of the demonstration. A member of the executive committee said last night that the most satisfactory reports had been coming in from those who had the work in hand, and that indications point to a striking demonstration.

Dr. Stafford to Make First Speech. Several important pronouncements are expected from the speakers who have been selected. Dr. Stafford, who will make the first address, has been a close student of the French situation for some time, and this, combined with his intimate knowledge of secular and church history, will make his remarks particularly interesting.

Edgar Gans, another of the orators of the evening, has been concerned with the French situation for some time. While abroad he investigated the conditions in France. He recently gave out an interview in which he discussed the situation from the point of view of an economist, and it is probable that his observations to-night will be along this line.

Rabbi Abraham Simon, of the Eighth Street Synagogue, who is well known as a man of marked conservatism, agreed to add his voice to the chorus of protests. He told Rev. John Van Schick, of Grace Reformed Church, and Maj. Edward T. McCrystal. All of these men have long been known as authorities on historical questions, and have been much quoted in their expressions on various phases in international affairs. It is said that three of to-night's speakers had intended making statements for the press, but consented to deliver them in person at the meeting.

Baltimore to Send Delegation.

The executive committee has avoided asking any of the employees of the government to participate as speakers, although several of the more important Catholics holding government positions signified their willingness to make addresses. It was thought that, as the meeting is merely an expression of Washingtonian sentiment, it was best to leave out government men.

A large delegation from Baltimore is expected to attend the meeting. The executive committee, which has charge of the arrangements, consists of Thomas J. Donovan, J. F. Shea, president of Carroll Institute, F. P. Sheehy, P. T. Moran, F. J. New, Ambrose Marsden, P. J. Halligan, William F. Dowsey, J. B. Sullivan, and Lawrence Mangan.

JANUARY WEATHER VARIES. Records Have Been Kept for Thirty-six Years.

If past weather conditions form any basis from which conclusions for the month of January may be drawn, the month recently submitted by the department of Agriculture should prove interesting for Washingtonians who are wondering what to expect during the approaching month.

The weather man's record runs as far back as 1870. Thirty-six years ago, and during that period, this city experienced all kinds and conditions of good, bad, and indifferent weather. The average temperature for this period was 33 degrees above zero. The warmest January was in 1890, when the weather averaged 44 above. The coldest since the records began was in 1880, at which time the mean temperature was 25.

The highest temperature Washington has ever had for its first month was on January 12, 1890. The thermometer reached 78. The oldest inhabitants remember the New Year's Day of 1881, when all Washington shivered outdoors and indoors with the temperature at 14 below zero.

The average fall of snow for thirty-six years has been a little more than three and one-third inches. The greatest fall for twenty-four consecutive hours was in 1901, when nearly one-half of a foot of snow fell.

Records show that the average number of cloudy days and partly cloudy days for January is 14. On an average for the thirty-six years there were twelve cloudy days, ten partly cloudy, and nine clear days.

The highest velocity of the wind was recorded in 1890, when the wind blew steadily at a rate of forty-six miles an hour.

COMPLAINS OF HIGH RATES.

Home Lumber Company Makes Charge Against Railroads.

Three complaints of excessive rates were filed yesterday with the Interstate Commerce Commission. The Blackwell Milling and Elevator Company, of Blackwell, Okla., complained of high rates on four shipped over the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railway Company to points in the Southwest. The Holcomb-Hayes Company asks for lower rates on cross ties shipped from Hopkinsville, Ky., to Herin, Ill., over the Central Railroad.

The Home Lumber Company, of Washington, claims that since November the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington Railroad and the Baltimore and Ohio have charged it excessive rates on lumber shipped from Landover, Md., to Hyattsville, Md., through Benning, in the District of Columbia.

School Flags, Emblem Charms, "Frat" Pins. FOR ALL SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

JOHN J. COSTINETT, MILITARY AND CITIZENS' TAILOR.

618-620 FOURTEENTH STREET N. W.

WILL INSIST ON BATH TUBS

Building Regulations Expected to Require Them in Small Houses.

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